

1116.
DR. BLUNDELL'S

Third Letter

TO HIS MEDICAL FRIENDS.

GENTLEMEN,—A second letter having issued under the signature of my late assistant, in which he engages to verify the assertions contained in his first, by evidence taken from my own letters, I think it but due respect to the opinion of my friends to point out, paragraph by paragraph, the fallacies which it contains. As in doing this I shall frequently be under the necessity of alluding to both his letters, perhaps those who do me the honour of a perusal will take the trouble of keeping those two documents continually open before them.*

The first of these statements of the writer was not, as misquoted in his second letter (LANCET, p. 259), that in 1829-30 he "was requested by Dr. Blundell to give clinical instruction to his pupils," but that "in 1829-30, in consequence of new arrangements which then took place, he was" so requested. (LANCET, p. 78.) This I again assert is not true. In consequence of the new arrangements, Mr. Doubleday, as stated in my first letter, was solely engaged to undertake the important task of giving clinical instructions to the whole class throughout, which he did with vigour and effect, and the writer of the letter was merely one of the Consulting Surgeon-Accoucheurs to a small portion of the general district; this too by his own wish, and not at my request, as the other five gentlemen were. So that to assert that in consequence of new arrangements, and by my request, he at this time was appointed to give clinical instructions is untrue; there were in this matter, touching him, no new arrangements; no request was made, and no such appointment took place.

* See Appendix.

2ndly. It was not asserted by Dr. Blundell that the writer was disqualified for the important duty assigned to Mr. Doubleday, because he was engaged in giving assistance to the rival class "*of Messrs. Grainger and Pilcher*" in Webb-street. Had this been the case, there would have been more fitness in the decisive answer of Mr. Pilcher. My words were (see 2nd letter, LANCET, p. 207) "engaged in giving assistance to the rival class in Webb-street,"—viz. the obstetric class—not the class of Messrs. Grainger and Pilcher, who were the *anatomical* and not the *obstetric* teachers in that school, a fact which necessarily weakens the force of Mr. P.'s evidence in the matter. Now Mr. Pilcher, on whose honour I have a full reliance, has authorized me to state, that although he does not himself believe that the writer gave assistance in more than two cases, in which he would have been wanting in humanity had he failed to act when called upon; yet that he Mr. P. is not prepared to assert that he must of necessity have known of all the cases in which such assistance was given. The truth is, and I had the statement so as to produce a full impression on my mind, that occasional help was afforded by the writer to the pupils of that school, in cases of difficult delivery, in more than one or two instances, and that the practice was likely to be continued; nor had I the least right to complain of this, though in prudence I deemed it fitting to engage, for the purposes above-mentioned, an accurate and active friend, equally able, and I believe wholly unconnected with the rival class in the neighbourhood. That I might be deceived in this impression as to the extent of the services rendered is very possible; Mr. Pilcher's letter goes some way to render it probable; but I received the information in my own

study, under circumstances that fixed it indelibly in my memory, from a gentleman on whose testimony as well as opportunities of knowing I thought that I might safely place reliance, viz., the writer of the letter himself. If the commemorative circumstances are called for, I am ready to state them confidentially to any honourable friend.

3rdly. The second statement of the writer was not merely, as he misquotes, that "when the extension and improvement in the obstetric department at Guy's Hospital occurred, his predecessor wrote to him, and requested him to officiate as his obstetric assistant" (see his second letter, *LANCET*, p. 259), but something more than this; "I received a communication from Dr. Blundell, requesting that as his duties were increased, and his health uncertain, I would officiate as his obstetric assistant;" a clause which clearly declares, by implication, that my health being reduced, and my labours too oppressive, I was made to look forth for assistance, and stretched out my hands to the writer; all which the writer engages to prove, by my own letters; observe, by my own letters.

To feel the untruth of this declaration, and the total downbreak of the evidence, it is only necessary to be acquainted with that which seems to be too often wanting in the statements of the writer, viz., "the truth, the whole truth—and nothing but the truth;" and which, as he has placed himself at the bar of public opinion, in legal formulary, we have a right to demand. "My silence," he says, "under such imputations might be mistaken for a consciousness, perhaps, for an admission of guilt. I must therefore verify my own assertions, and the verifications shall rest upon the best of all testimony, that of *the Doctor's own letters*." The entire, though brief account of the transaction, is this—and see how opinions change when we look upon both sides of the shield.

Towards the close of the summer of 1831, when I was neither thinking nor dreaming of the writer as my assistant, passing near the great steps of the Hospital, my attention was drawn to one of the Guy's papers (as I was then told unpublished, though printed) exhibiting upon its face the name of the writer as my assistant; and I was asked whether I would consent to the appointment. At this time little in the way of decision was said; but it having been further

intimated to me that the old gentleman at the head of affairs, the treasurer of the hospital, was desirous to communicate with me respecting the matter, I had a conversation in his office, in which I intimated the risk of schism, insisted upon retaining the clinical lectures, and showed a disinclination for the proposed alliance, with a disposition however to give way; at last the good man and myself parted, with this memorable exclamation upon his part,—“The out-door patients Mr. A. *must* attend,” emphatically “*MUST*.” On returning to George-street, I found it was now time to decide whether I would surrender to the wishes of the hospital, or tender my resignation, for I had enough of the gift of second sight to penetrate a little into futurity here. Before, however, I could come to a determination, it was necessary that I should hear the terms to which my proposed assistant would accede; and in this view, on the 31st of August 1831, I addressed to him the following note:—

“1, Great George-street, Westminster.

My Dear Sir,—Will you inform me, please, whether you can give me a call this morning, at one p.m., as I wish to communicate with you on a subject IN WHICH YOU take an interest. I am, dear sir, yours faithfully,

JAMES BLUNDELL.”

The interview took place, and the result I furnish my readers, in the duplicate of a paper now in my late assistant's possession, the terms of which were dictated by myself

“Aug. 31, 1831.

My Dear Sir,—The impression on my mind, from our conversation this morning relative to Guy's Hospital, leads to the following conclusions:—

1st. That my being admitted to perform certain of the duties attached to the clinical obstetric instruction, gives me no claim to the midwifery chair, so long as you choose to occupy it.

2nd. That I am to be recognised as your assistant in the above department, you of course, taking the lead.

These matters, my dear sir, are the formal basis of the arrangement; and allow me to assure you that not only in the letter but in the spirit of them, I fully concur.—I am, my dear sir, yours faithfully,

&c. &c.

To Dr. Blundell.”

This note having been written and delivered to me, I thought it right to acquiesce in his appointment. And now having given the whole of the transaction from first to last,—having shown by the above statement, that request from me was totally out of the question—that solicitation came from the other party, and that it was my office to define, not to receive, terms of admission, let me ask how is the contrary proved? How is it made to appear, from these notes or otherwise, that I requested an assistant? How is it made to appear, from these letters or otherwise, that I pleaded ill-health; and that, in consequence of this, or of any circumstances whatsoever, I requested this gentleman, above all others, to officiate? Dr. Blundell wrote? Dr. Blundell expressed a wish? a wish for what—that the proposed assistant would listen to his complaints about ill-health? That he would graciously lend a favourable ear to his petition for assistance? No such thing. The note merely expresses a wish to communicate on a subject in which the *proposed assistant* took an interest. And what was this subject? Why the proposal that was come from that gentleman's friends; the request, not to say the something more than request, on the part of the treasurer, that Dr. Blundell would accede to the appointment; the desire to know distinctly and in writing, without evasion or cavil, the terms to which the proposed assistant would bind himself, *in letter and in spirit*, on condition of obtaining the first and therefore the most important step of his promotion. These were the subjects on which I desired to communicate, and these only; to these subjects, and to no other, does the term "wish" cited from my letter, and blazoned forth in italics, apply.

Availing themselves of the light which is here brought to bear on the transaction, let my readers do me the favour again to peruse the letters, and then judging impartially, as between man and man, let them decide whether *from those letters*, as promised, the writer has made good his words, viz. that I requested him to officiate as my assistant. For my part, I see no help for the matter, unless indeed we have recourse to the elastic principle of my Lord Peter in the affair of the testament and the shoul-derknots, when "he who found the former evasions took heart, and said, 'Brothers, there is yet hope; for though we cannot find them *totidem verbis*, nor *totidem syllabis*, I dare engage to make them out *tertio modo*, or *totidem literis*.'" But to drop all jest, the plain truth is, the writer has not been able to prove his statement *in any way*, much less from the letters; and for this obvious reason, that such was not the fact. Nor is this a question of small importance. Solicitation

for an assistant is one thing; the intrusion of an assistant is another: the one is an indication of a cordial desire of union; the other, as every one acquainted with an hospital knows, may signify a desire to displace. The distinction is not verbal only but real, and touches the very heart of the business.

4thly. When it was that the writer of the letter was *personally* introduced to the treasurer, that introduction never having been given by me, I am even at this moment ignorant. All that it is necessary for me to know respecting the matter is, that as a gentleman fitted for the good man's purpose, he had been by character and recommendation effectually introduced before the preceding transaction took place, as indeed the above narration itself clearly shows. The writer, however, seems to have left his readers at liberty to conclude that his personal introduction to the treasurer came from me; perhaps this is accidental; but if designed, it certainly evinces an acquaintance with the pleader's art, for had the introduction come from me, this of course would have strengthened his former assertion, that it was Dr. Blundell who solicited his appointment. So far, however, was this from being the case, that one morning a gentleman of the hospital, whom it is unnecessary here to name, but whose name I am ready with his assent to communicate to any common friend, called in George Street for the express purpose of saying, "Dr. Blundell, I have just been told that you say that I introduced Mr. A. to the Treasurer," or words to that effect. "Now remember"—I remember the words as well as the notes of a favourite air—"Whatever comes of it, it was not I that introduced him;" an address which clearly shows what was supposed to be the *animus* in operation within those political walls. Was this being introduced to the Treasurer at the *solicitation* of Dr. Blundell? Was this being introduced to the Treasurer in the way that Dr. Blundell was by his predecessor?

5thly. The fourth statement of the writer was, not as he again misquotes in his second letter, (*LANCET*, p. 260,) "I gave the clinical lectures for two or three seasons," but, "I gave the clinical lectures for two or three seasons—having been solicited to do all this by Dr. Blundell himself" (see his first letter, *LANCET*, p. 78). And here is his proof: My first clinical lecture, he says, was delivered in the Medical Theatre of Guy's Hospital at the latter end of the session 1832-3, and my letter which he adduces proves that this was after the 13th of April 1833.—Now since the 4th of June 1834, I have had no more professional connexion with Guy's Hospital than with the hospitals and clinical lectures of Paris

or New York; my advertisement was refused; a spurious document was substituted; the old gentleman at the head of affairs knowingly and contumaciously retained the bastard paper upon the board; and from that time to this, within the walls of a place where such an insolent indignity was attempted, my foot has never been set. As therefore the writer's lectures, at my solicitation, under my authority, and as my assistant ended with the 4th of June 1834, and began at earliest with the middle of April 1833, and as the season ends with May every year, it is so clear, if he speak of seasons, (and of seasons alone he does speak in his letter,*) that he lectured during the last season only,* and that small portion of the preceding which extends from the middle of April to the middle of May 1833; that unless one season and four or five weeks of another are equivalent in time to two or three seasons, the assertion becomes convicted, not only of an untruth, but of an absurdity as great as,

1 season + $\frac{1}{3}$ of a season = 3 seasons; or,
1 season + $\frac{1}{6}$ of a season = 2 seasons.†

Or put the absurdity in another form. The writer on my account lectured 37 or 38 weeks exclusive of the vacation weeks, which do not belong to the "season." Then, unless 37 or 38 weeks are equal to 98 weeks, he did not lecture three seasons; for three seasons are equal to 98 weeks; and unless 37 or 38 weeks are equal to 65 weeks, he did not lecture even two seasons, for two seasons are equal to 65 weeks.

But he will say perhaps that, though he speaks of "seasons," he means to include the vacation. Be it so. Then, unless 59 or 60 weeks † are equal to 156 weeks §, he did not lecture three seasons including vacations, and unless 59 or 60 weeks are equal to 104 weeks, he did not lecture even two seasons including vacation. Put it which way you will, the absurdity always remains the same, viz. 1 + a small fractional part of 1 = 3, or that 1 + a small fractional part of 1 = 2.

* The season always begins 1st of October and ends 15th of May, or thereabouts. The portion of the end of the third season during which the assistant lectured, began at earliest 13th of April 1833, and ended 15th of May 1833. His lectures from 15th of May to 4th of June, 1834, are excluded from this calculation, because they do not belong to the season but to the recess, and it is of "seasons" that he speaks; but the absurdity would be as great if they were thrown in to him as a God-send.

† It will hardly be necessary to remark, that the sign + signifies "with the addition of," and = signifies "is" or "are equal to." Read therefore "one season" with the addition of "one-sixth of a season" is equal to "three seasons," and so on.

‡ For, including vacations, 59 or 69 is the number of weeks that he lectured altogether.

§ For three seasons, with their vacations, are equal to 156 weeks. Two, with their vacations, are of course equal to 104 weeks.

What then does the writer mean by stating that he gave the clinical lectures during *two or three seasons*? that he gave them during two or three seasons at the solicitation of Dr. Blundell?

6thly. The next statement of the writer, but which did not appear in his former letter, is, "that since 1831, when the clinical obstetric teaching commenced, my predecessor may have given eight or ten such (clinical) lectures, I have delivered at least 70."—(LANCET, p. 270.) The dates in this statement will be the better for a slight correction; they should stand thus: "Since 1831 my predecessor may have delivered eight or ten such (clinical) lectures, but since April 1833 I have delivered at least 70." The correction is not without its importance, as will hereafter appear.

Now before this vaunted course of 70 lectures can be honestly set by the side of the eight or ten clinical lectures said to have been delivered by the writer's predecessor, after the preceding specimens of untenable and indeed absurd exaggeration, the reader will not be surprised to hear that from this number 70 a very large deduction must be made. And first, as these lectures continued through the summer vacation of 1834, for he tells us, "I continued to lecture clinically during the present summer (1834)," from the number of 70 at least one-fifth must be deducted for lectures given after my connexion with the hospital had entirely ceased,—in other words, after the 4th of June 1834; for as the whole period of the lecturing extends from April (1833) at earliest, to the close of September in the subsequent year (1834), that is, over a period of seventeen months and a half, those four months of this term during which I had no connexion with the hospital, and of course was in no way responsible for the lectures, viz. from June 1834 to September inclusive, constitute more than one-fifth of the whole. From these lectures, then, set off on this account 14, i.e., one-fifth of the 70, a very moderate deduction, and the number shrinks immediately to 56.

But again, even from this reduced number of 56 lectures, it will immediately appear that a further and much larger deduction must be made, as the following calculation will show. The clinical course of the writer may be divided into two parts. The first, comprising those lectures which might be grounded on the ward cases; the second, those which might be grounded on the out-door cases. Of the ward cases, on an average the number was about ten; of the out-door cases, the average so far as I am able to learn was at least sixty. Now, from the nature of clinical lectures, their number must in the main be in proportion to the number of cases actually under care; and

therefore the lectures on the ward cases may be set down at 1-7th, and those of the out-door cases at 6-7ths of the whole. From this it follows that of the fifty-six lectures which remain after the former deduction, 8, that is 1-7th, may be fairly referred to the ward cases; and 48, that is, 6-7ths to the out-door department. Now as the Treasurer's "must," had from the first entirely removed me from the out-door department, and its lectures; from the whole number of fifty-six lectures, for which I am absurdly made responsible, let us deduct those forty-eight with which I had no concern, and the total immediately shrinks to eight, as the entire number for which I remain accountable.

Lastly. This course of eight lectures must further be divided into two parts, that which belonged to the vacation of 1833, from May to October, a period of something more than four months;* and that which belonged to the session of 1833-4, a period of about eight months, for the writer tells us that he lectured through the sessions and summer vacations. Now as the session in round numbers constitutes 2-3rds of the whole period, and the vacation 1-3rd, to the session we may fairly assign 2-3rds of these lectures, say 5 or 6, and to the vacation 2 or 3; and thus, when subjected to the cold hand of arithmetic, this magnificent number of seventy lectures, for which Dr. Blundell is made responsible, suddenly drops from seventy to fifty-six, from fifty-six to eight, and ultimately settles down as low as four or five lectures for a session, a number which it will be observed exactly corresponds with that which I delivered myself, eight or ten in the course of two sessions, in other words, four or five in each.†

But should this calculation displease, there is another way of viewing this matter, which perhaps, with some, including my late assistant himself, may be more convincing and intelligible.

The clinical wards of the practice of medicine, which I need not observe is the leading subject in a medical school, contained altogether 19 female beds and 24 male beds, thus furnishing 43 cases, for the beds are generally kept full. Now, in the course of a session the clinical lectures delivered by Drs. Cholmeley, Bright, and Addison, taking two months each, according to my best information, amounted altogether, on an average, to between twenty-

five and thirty,* viz. one lecture per week during six months, rather more, however, than less. Now, as their beds, forty-five in number, were more than three times as numerous as my own, ten or twelve in number, unless we suppose that all those gentlemen were slack in their clinical exertions; twenty-five divided by three will bring us near the proportion which the ten or twelve cases required from me, that number will be 8, (8 and a fraction,)[†] that is, three or four more than I am said to have actually delivered in each session. But for this smallness in the number of the clinical lectures, I was accustomed to compensate, first, by the copiousness of my information by the bed-side; and, secondly, by throwing the spirit of the clinical information into the obstetric lectures, one of which I delivered every morning. In doing this, besides considering my own repose, I remembered that obstetrics constituted, though an important, yet a secondary subject, in a medical school; that the time of the pupils was fully occupied; and that to cram them was one thing, and to instruct them was another; and it is evident, if from twenty-five to thirty clinical lectures annually were sufficient in medicine, from forty to fifty clinical lectures‡ in obstetrics must have been more than sufficient. Were none of them given as an exercise in extemporaneous declamation? Is there not a current report that at some of these lectures the class assembled scarcely exceeded some three or four persons? Have not the wags added, *apprentices* included? But, perhaps it may be said that, whatever we may think of the judgment of the writer, his activity, at least, greatly exceeds that of Dr. Blundell. Seventy lectures on the one hand, eight or ten on the other. Not so, however; during the period that the writer gave this vaunted number of seventy lectures, Dr. Blundell, who lectured six mornings in the week, was in the habit of giving, at least, five times seventy, exclusive of two lectures delivered weekly during the session, on physiological subjects.

To conclude then, instead of the exposition of facts neutralizing my statement, and proving it to be "incorrect and unguarded," as the writer has asserted, it confirms that statement in every particular, as the following citation of it will clearly prove: "It is not true that during the first *two* years of the clinical establishment, the delivery of the clinical lectures was by Dr. Blundell's solicitation committed to the writer of the letter;" on the con-

* The more exact period of the vacation is four months and a half, that of the session seven months and a half. I have taken them in round numbers.

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† $30 \div 3\frac{1}{2} = 60 \div 7 = 8\frac{4}{7}$

‡ Seventy lectures in seventeen or eighteen months give from forty to fifty lectures per annum.

trary, "during those two sessions the lectures, agreeably to an arrangement made with the treasurer, were given by myself (Dr. B.) ; and, in consequence of this arrangement, the writer did not lecture at all till the close of the second out of three sessions, viz. April 1833, the session terminating very soon after, viz. in the middle of May ; and even then he lectured unsolicited, and without my (Dr. B.'s) being informed of it for some time afterwards."* And is not all this true ? Why, good heavens ! the writer himself has furnished the data which prove it ; the data which prove that he began to lecture in April 1833, indeed after the 13th ; the data which prove that he began lecturing unsolicited ; the data which prove further, even according to his own showing, that he was not asked to lecture at all, till many months after he had begun lecturing of his own accord. How could the writer then have the conscience to assert that he had given the clinical lectures during two or three seasons ? "That he had given the clinical lectures during two or three seasons at the solicitation of Dr. Blundell himself?" How could he have the conscience to assert this, when it is clear, with respect to seasons, that he lectured *one only* and the *ful* end of another ; and when he is now under the humiliating necessity of acknowledging, that it was not till the beginning of the last of the three seasons that he was in any shape asked to lecture at all ?

8thly. With respect to the writer's fifth statement. In the first place, he is wrong in representing that statement to have been merely that he "saw and treated nearly all the cases in the female ward ; and that he had the entire charge of the Hospital charity, and of the obstetric out-patients," as a correct citation of the misquoted passage will prove ; for he has suppressed a most important clause in his original charge, viz. *that he was solicited to do all this by Dr. Blundell himself*. See the writer's first letter, "HAVING BEEN SOLICITED TO DO ALL THIS BY DR. BLUNDELL HIMSELF." (LANCET, p. 78.) Now as *one* main object of that letter was to prove that he was not a nominee or protégé of the Treasurer (see his first letter, LANCET, p. 78), and as it would have told much in strengthening his assertion, if it could have been shown that in this, as on other occasions, he had been solicited by me as asserted, he ought either to have made good his words with respect to this solicitation as an important part of his defence, or to have given an honourable retraction ; and surely, in any case, he ought not to have suppressed the clause which, whether intentionally or from carelessness, he has very improperly done.

Further, the writer tells us that he saw and treated nearly all the cases in the female ward and that he will prove this by my letters and after citing two notes, he comes to the monstrous conclusion, that at my solicitation "during the thirty-eight months that it (the ward) has been open for the reception of patients," Dr. B. his "predecessor, has been at attendance *twelve*, and" the writer "twenty-six months." And here, not invidiously, but with a view of doing justice, and setting the reckless inaccuracy of my late assistant in that light which truth requires, I request the particular attention of those who honour me with their perusal. On my account, as he clearly intimates in his *second* letter, and at my solicitation, as he distinctly declares in his *first*, he says, he attended these wards ; and it is clear, on reading his statement, that he makes me accountable for *eight-and-thirty* months, during which the wards have been opened ; for he brings it as a charge, that while Dr. Blundell attended during only twelve months of this period the writer was in attendance twenty-six. Now in the beginning of last June, 1834 my professional connexion with the hospital entirely ceased, as already distinctly stated. According to his own showing, the wards were first committed to my care in the end of September 1831, rather later than earlier therefore the whole period during which the wards were open to my attendance, instead of being THIRTY-EIGHT MONTHS, was only THIRTY-TWO, or at the most THIRTY-THREE MONTHS. How is it then that he makes out against me a charge for THIRTY EIGHT MONTHS ? why, by actually setting down to my account a period of five months (from June to November), throughout which I have had no more to do with the clinical and other establishments of Guy's Hospital, than with those of the Hotel Dieu. Gracious Heaven ! what are we to think of all this ? Is it intentional, or is it a most thoughtless and reckless inaccuracy ?

The figures of the writer being clearly incorrect, I will now endeavour to state according to his own data, what the respective periods of attendance really were. From the end of September 1831, or thereabouts, when the wards were first committed to my care, to June 4, 1834, is a period of *two-and-thirty* months ; this being the whole period during which the clinical establishment was under my direction, and during which it was my duty, or indeed my right, to enter the wards. Now, my attendance during the first session was at least from the beginning of October 1831 to the end of May 1832. (See the date of the letter in which I resigned the ward to my assistant, May 31, 1832, LANCET, p. 260.) Here is a period not of *six* months merely, as stated by the writer with his usual injustice and inaccuracy.

* See Dr. Blundell's second letter.

acy, but of *eight*. Further, my second attendance on the wards began, not in *November* or *December*, as again incorrectly and unfairly stated by my assistant, but in the *first week of October* 1832, and ended April 13, 1833, (see the date of my second letter); here again is a period of more than *six months*, instead of *four and a half*; thus it appears that of *thirty-two months*, during which Dr. Blundell was the director, he was in attendance more than *fourteen months*, these being the active and laborious period of the session, and the writer was in attendance, not *twenty-six months*, as he states, but something less than *eighteen*, and of these *eighteen months*, *eight or nine months* were *vacation*; when there is a recess at the hospital, and when of course both the professors and pupils are expected to recruit for the session. Thus the writer's statements of our respective labours are as true as that *eighteen months* are equal to *twenty-six months*; or that *fourteen months* are equal to *twelve*. Or, to put the fact in another form, of *twenty-two or twenty-three* SESSIONAL months that the clinical wards have been open under my direction I have been in attendance *fourteen months*, and my assistant between *eight and nine*.

9thly. And here again I entreat in justice the special notice of the reader, though aware that to discover and rectify these erroneous representations must be as wearisome to him as to me. After making a preceding statement which is full of errors, declaring me answerable for the wards during five months that I have had no connexion with the hospital; asserting that I began clinical attendance in *December* 1832, when in reality it was *two months* earlier; informing his readers, that having resigned the wards on the 13th of April 1833, and begun my attendance in *November* or *December* preceding, that is towards the end of *November* 1832, I had been in attendance *six months*, though the whole period is not more than *four and a half*; after giving under his fifth head of reply a statement which as shown above suppressed or omitted one of the most important clauses of the original which he undertook to defend; after, in a word, skipping from error to error with the recklessness and levity of the hird upon the hough; the writer takes his stand in the middle of this *gachis* and asks triumphantly, "What must be thought of Dr. Blundell's startling assertion that these wards were with a few occasional interruptions regularly attended by himself, and not at his solicitation" by the author of this letter? Why after all that has gone before, it is obvious enough what will be thought—not that Dr. Blundell has asserted that which is not true, but that the writer has had recourse to a misrepresentation, as will immediately appear on consult-

ing the original; and here it is word for word.

"It is not true as insinuated, that during the *two first* of the three sessions, through which the clinical establishment had subsisted, the main burden of the ward fell, at Dr. Blundell's solicitation, on the writer of the letter; on the contrary, with a few occasional interruptions, these wards were regularly attended by Dr. Blundell himself."*

And is not all this literally true? Did not Dr. Blundell, after the wards were put under his care, attend during the whole of the first session ending May 1832, and indeed beyond it? Did he not further attend during almost the whole of the second session ending May 1833, with a slight interruption of *four or five weeks only* in the end of the session, and this occasioned by ill health? Why, the letters and their dates, instead of confuting the assertion, confirm it with a minuteness of accuracy which, when contrasted with the random assertions of the writer, will, I am persuaded, strengthen the confidence of the reader in all the rest of my statements.

And now the public having been enabled to see and feel the errors, perversions, misquotations, not to add arithmetical absurdities, which riddle and dilapidate this vaunted defence, is the writer prepared to fall back upon it and repeat "that he is quite willing to abide the verdict of the professional public as to the veracity of his statements?"

With respect to the nature of the obstrusive interest at Guy's, I have to remark, that notwithstanding the assertion made to the contrary, it was decidedly *private property*. It had existed for years *extra mœnia*, before the medical school of Guy's was in being; it was illustrated by the lecturer's private museum; for some time after the class was introduced into the hospital, the janitor of the theatre was the lecturer's own private servant,—the entries were made and the subscriptions were received at first, and for a very considerable period, by the lecturer's own hand, accountable to none, and afterwards, permission having first been asked, they were deposited with a very worthy man, the apothecary of the hospital, who received commission, rendered his account, and was therefore the agent of the teacher; money was paid by the lecturer to the hospital for certain accommodations; the teacher had a right (restrained only by his own sense of propriety) to advertise when and where he pleased, nor, had he

* On reading this paragraph, it will be seen at once that I am asserting the regularity of my attendance during the two first of the three sessions; the writer, however, omits the first part of the passage, that which fixes the time of the regular attendance, and thus of course takes out the true meaning from what follows. Thus the disputant in the story, to prove the non-existence of a Great First Cause, quoted a *part* of the text *only*, omitting the preface "The fool hath said in his heart."

deemed it fitting to quit the hospital, taking his class and his museum along with him, was there any legal impediment to bar. Gradual encroachments there were; the apothecary of the hospital, as stated, was proposed as the receiver of a part of the subscriptions; the treasurer asked and obtained permission to hold the fees; within the last year or two it was bruited that he had begun officiously to give his opinion as to when the course had better commence, and ultimately with an audaciousness of impertinence which has been most deservedly withstood and rebuked, he took that monstrous liberty with the name of a gentleman every way his equal, which has excited the disdain of which complaint is now made. All this, however, made no change in the original nature of the property, and surely, unless this statement can be disproved, he must be a very indifferent jurist, and not over delicate in his perceptions of right and wrong, who could lay hold of such a property as if it had belonged to the hospital.

To this, however, it is urged, that the chair belonged to the hospital, and that "such was formerly Dr. Blundell's own opinion;" in proof of which we have, as usual, a misrepresentation, as the reader no doubt by this time will be fully prepared to expect. The clause so triumphantly extracted from the draft, as every lawyer probably will see at the first glance, did not come from Dr. Blundell or Dr. Blundell's solicitor, but from the writer and the writer's solicitor; and shows not Dr. B.'s opinion, but the caution of the other party. As Dr. B.'s title was in no way impeached, his solicitor merely assented. In fact the connexion between the hospital and the lecturer seems to have partaken much of the nature of that subsisting between landlord and tenant.

With respect to the unworthy charge of sordid motives with which the parties have endeavoured to asperse their opponent, the profound historian of antiquity, in one far-reaching apophthegm, has at once enabled us to account for so groundless an imputation, and at the same time, in a great measure, secured us against the impression which it was intended to produce, "*Proprum est humani generis odisse quem laceris.*" To hate the man you have injured is the peculiar instinct of our nature. But as the issue of the whole transaction is to leave to my good friend at the hospital the presentation to the chair and its emoluments within the walls, and to place Dr. Blundell without the walls, divested of much of his interest, and without a single drachma of compensation, if there be rapacity in the transaction, it is evident enough on which side it lies. Could Dr. Blundell have been moved by pecuniary motives, a sort of bribe

was not wanting, for if he would have bowed his neck to hospital insolence "the chair was still open," and his servility would have been rewarded by a *readmission to his own*—as the ward in the well-known comedy was to be munificently repaid for his complaisance to the alderman by the sparkling gift of a portion of her own fortune. But this matter may be disposed of in few words, in a way which my friends on the public will readily understand. If clergymen were driven from his benefice by intimidation, were the authors of the wrong to take the presentation into their own hands, in consequence of his retreat, would deny that a great injury had been inflicted? In like manner, if a professor be impelled to leave the chair in consequence of the attempted indignities to which he is unworthily subjected, who can doubt that the authors of the procedure, in availing themselves of their misconduct to seize the presentation, are guilty of an injustice too. The fact is, if the truth must be told, that besides the grave indignity that was attempted, Dr. Blundell, as hinted in his first letter, sustained a serious injury; and to throw the aggressors into the wrong, Dr. B. demanded compensation for that injury; *not as the reward of silence*, but as a *matter of right*, well knowing, at the same time, that he should obtain nothing. And here I may observe, by the way, that in this part of the transaction one circumstance occurred which was truly comic, and would, I think, on the stage, produce an admirable scenic effect. After the parties, by whatever means, came into possession of the chair and its emoluments, without compensation, the old gentleman at the head of affairs actually requested that a paltry balance might be allowed still to lie in his hands to meet minute contingencies! And is it for these men to talk of the love of money? And is this the individual who wants to set his foot upon the neck of the graduates of an honourable and salutary profession? Oh, spirit of Hogarth!† Oh, mighty genius! creator of the never-to-be-forgotten Shylock! Why the Jew would have been contented with his pound of flesh, while the Gentile—

But I turn from these odious topics, I trust, for ever; nor should I have wasted so much attention upon them, had I not thought it might be expected by my friends that I should expose the misrepresentation and fallacies behind which the other parties have attempted to shelter their conduct.

I have the honour to be, Gentlemen,
Your faithful servant,

JAMES BLUNDELL, M.D.

1, Great George St. Westminster,
Dec. 4, 1834.

* See the Trip to the Jubilee, act 2, scene 4.

† See the last scene in Marriage à-la-Mode.

A P P E N D I X.

MIDWIFERY CHAIR OF GUY'S HOSPITAL.

DR. A.'S REPLY TO DR. BLUNDELL.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

SIR, — Having read a letter from Dr. Blundell in Saturday's LANCET calculated to produce an erroneous impression, I am anxious to prevent such a result, by a very brief statement of facts.

Dr. Blundell has certainly retired from Guy's, and there are connected with his retirement some circumstances requiring an explanation which his letter does not afford. It must be supposed from the statement, "that the gentleman whom the treasurer seemed desirous to patronise," and the insertion of whose name as a joint obstetric lecturer appears to have been the grave indignity which the Doctor could not brook, was a nominee or protégé of the treasurer, unknown, or nearly so, to Dr. Blundell. The entire reverse of this is the fact. Nine years ago negotiations were entered into between Dr. Blundell and myself, without the treasurer's knowledge, the object of which was my succeeding to the obstetric chair, a large pecuniary consideration being required by Dr. B. But as it was intimated to me that the treasurer would not for a moment listen to, or allow, any arrangement founded on a pecuniary basis, I abandoned the idea, but continued my obstetric pursuits at the hospital.

In 1829-30, in consequence of new arrangements which then took place, I was requested by Dr. Blundell to give clinical instructions to his pupils. It had been recommended by the Doctor to have a lying-in ward, but instead of it the present Hospital Lying-in Charity was established, and cases of uterine disease were received into a part of the hospital appropriated to that purpose. I then received a communication from Dr. Blundell, requesting that as his duties were increased and his health uncertain, I would officiate as his obstetric assistant. It was not till this period that I had the pleasure of being personally known to the treasurer. I gave the clinical lectures

for two or three seasons; I saw and treated nearly all the cases in the female ward, I had the entire charge of the Hospital Lying-in Charity and of the obstetric out-patients, and I gave forty out of the forty-three midwifery lectures in the spring course of 1834, having been solicited to do all this by Dr. Blundell himself.

Surely then the circumstance of my name being associated as colleague (for it had been so already as obstetric assistant) is no justification of the indignation he expresses. Can it be deemed extraordinary, after what I had done, that I should express a strong wish that my name should be included in the lecture papers as colleague, so that in the event of renewed illness, and his requiring a large share of help from me, I should appear before the class on the proper footing, and prevent the Doctor's inability being regarded as a breach of faith, either on his own part, or that of the school?

If Dr. Blundell has retired from Guy's, it is, to use his own words, because "sic jubeo, sic volo, stet pro ratione voluntas." It appears, by his own statement, that he might have resumed the chair, "if he had not considered it redolent and reeking with the indignity that stained it." I may be allowed perhaps to express my surprise and regret, that this indignity was supposed by him to consist, in my being called upon to act as his colleague instead of his representative, in which situation I had reason to believe, from the close attention and numbers of the class, that my services gave satisfaction. Dr. Blundell, however, evinced his prompt determination to retire, by the immediate removal of his museum, a step unattended by inconvenience, as the rich museum of the hospital is well provided in the obstetric department. I may here perhaps just observe, that Dr. Blundell was introduced to the treasurer by his respected predecessor Dr. Haighton in the same manner as I have been by himself; but it is somewhat singular, that he has not alluded to

the exertions of his honoured relative, from whom he received a class greater in number than it has since been. The present high repute of the hospital and school in all its departments is too well known to call forth any remarks on that subject. I trust I have now shown, that Dr. B.'s statement, "that

he had not introduced the gentleman who the treasurer thought right to patronise," not correct. I am,

Sir, your humble servant,

S. A.

Oct. 1st, 1834.

DR. A.'S REPLY TO DR. BLUNDELL'S SECOND LETTER.

To the Editor of THE LANCET.

Sir,—In my reply to Dr. Blundell's first letter, I made certain statements. These my predecessor has unequivocally contradicted, and fourteen times has he repeated, "that they are not true." My silence under such imputations might be mistaken for a consciousness, perhaps for an admission, of guilt. I must therefore verify my own assertions, and this verification shall rest on the best of all testimony; that of the Doctor's own letters. In addition, I shall only claim the attention of the medical public, and space in your journal, for two or three comments on the "fourteen heads" of my predecessor.

My first statement was, "that in 1829-30, I was requested by Doctor Blundell to give clinical instructions to his pupils." This is admitted, if it were not, my name on the printed papers of his charity would establish the fact. I did not say, that I gave clinical lectures, but I expressly used the term "clinical instructions" to characterize my precise employment. I will not stop to show how much I did, and how long I acted in this capacity: the Doctor has attempted to prove how little I accomplished, and with such efforts I am quite satisfied. In connexion with this fact, it is said, "that I was disqualified for the important duty assigned to my friend Mr. Dohleday, because I was engaged in giving assistance to the rival class of Messrs. Grainger and Pilcher, in Wehh-street."

How true, or, rather "how untrue," is this statement of the former obstetric lecturer at Guy's, the subjoined letter will best show:—

"Saturday Morning,

"Nov. 1st, Union-street, Borough, 1834.

"My dear A.,—I perfectly well recollect the conversation I had with you relative to the midwifery chair at Wehh-street, when the late Dr. Hopkins was incapacitated to continue his duties; and that in consequence of your connexion with

Guy's Hospital, you declined to enter into any arrangements with us. I can also positively state, that you never did assist, nor had an opportunity of assisting, the obstetric class of our school.

"I am, my dear sir, yours truly,

"GEORGE PILCHER.

My second statement was, "that when the extension and improvement in the obstetric department at Guy's occurred, my predecessor wrote to me, and requested me to officiate as his obstetric assistant. In his second letter this is denied. The proofs I now subjoin:—

"1, Great George-street, Westminster

"Wednesday Morning, Aug. 31st, 1831

"My dear Sir,—Will you inform me, please, whether you can give me a call this morning at one p.m., as I wish to communicate with you on a subject in which you take an interest.

"I am, my dear Sir, yours faithfully

"JAMES BLUNDELL."

The interview took place, and the result I furnish to my readers, in the "facsimile" of a paper now in my predecessor's possession; the terms of which were dictated by himself:—

"August 31st, 1831.

"My dear Sir,—The impression on my mind from our conversation this morning, relative to Guy's Hospital, leads to the following conclusions:—

"1st. 'That my being admitted to perform certain of the duties attached to the clinical instruction gives me no claim to the midwifery chairs, so long as you choose to occupy it.'

"2ndly, 'That I am to be recognised as your assistant in the above department, you of course taking the lead.'

"These matters, my dear sir, are the formal basis of the arrangement, and allow me to assure you, that not only in the letter,

but in the spirit, of them I fully concur. I am, my dear sir, yours faithfully,

"S. A.

"To Dr. Blundell."

Any one may now understand how true, or rather, how "untrue," is my predecessor's assertion, that *he* did not request, but merely *acquiesced* in my becoming his obstetric assistant. Such acquiescence, to say the least, was not passive, but discriminating and vigilant, and proves how sensitive he was to his own interests.

My *third* statement was, "that it was not till 1831, after the conclusion of the above arrangement, that I had the pleasure of being personally known to the treasurer." This gentleman's first conversation with me had reference to this very arrangement, he being naturally desirous to know the individual on whom, in Dr. Blundell's absence or illness, the important duties connected with the hospital were to devolve.

My *fourth* statement was, "that I gave the clinical lectures for two or three seasons." This is denied. Here is the proof;—My first clinical lecture was delivered in the medical theatre of the Hospital, at the latter end of the session 1832-33. I continued to lecture clinically in the same theatre during the summer of 1833, the winter session of 1833-34, and during the present summer. Since 1831, when the clinical obstetric teaching commenced, my predecessor may have given *eight* or *ten* such lectures, I have delivered at least *seventy*. In April, 1833, his health, as will be seen hereafter, failed, and the charge of the obstetric ward devolved entirely on myself. The clinical lecturing was involved in the duties of the ward, and I therefore performed it. Perhaps, however, my predecessor will remember, that late in the summer of 1833, his nephew, engaged I believe in the law, called on me at my residence, and by his uncle's desire, who was still in weak health, *requested* that I would not only continue in charge of the ward, but that I would also continue to lecture clinically.

This exposition of facts will suffice to neutralize the Doctor's unguarded and incorrect condemnation of my fourth assertion, "that it is not true."

My *fifth* statement was, "that I saw and treated *nearly* all the cases in the female ward, that I had the entire charge of the Hospital Lying-in Charity, and of the obstetric out-patients. Dr. Blundell himself, notwithstanding his denial, shall furnish the proofs of the first part of this proposition, the only part he really attempts to contradict. The *obstetric* ward opened about September 1831. My predecessor commenced his attendance in November, and continued

it till May 1832, a period of *six* months. I then received from him the following note:—

"Dear, Sir,—As I am going to the continent for four or five weeks, I beg to commit to your care, during my absence, the clinical patients in Mary's ward; and I am, dear Sir, yours faithfully,

"JAMES BLUNDELL.

"1, Great George-street,
May 31st, 1832."

In November or December, 1832, my predecessor again took charge of the ward, and resigned it to me in April 1833, having continued to perform its duties for another period of six months. On this occasion, he forwarded to me the subjoined communication:—

"Great George-street,

"April 13th, 1833.

"Dear Sir,—As I am at present confined to the house by indisposition, I will thank you to take under your care the obstetric patients in the clinical ward, till further notice. I am, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

"JAMES BLUNDELL."

Since the 13th April, 1833, up to the present time, Dr. Blundell has not once entered the ward; so that, during the thirty-eight months it has been open for the reception of patients, my predecessor has been in attendance twelve, and I twenty-six, months.

What now must be thought of his "startling assertion," that "with a few occasional interruptions, these wards were regularly attended by himself, and not at his solicitation by Dr. A." Surely I may say, and *most unwillingly* do I adopt my predecessor's uncourteous phraseology, that these declarations are "utterly untrue."

Such were the assertions which Dr. Blundell, by an excess of ingenuity, has contrived fourteen times "untruly" to gainsay and deny. After the proofs I have adduced, I am quite willing to abide the verdict of the professional public, as to their veracity.

I shall now proceed to make two or three comments on some other parts of this lengthy epistle, feeling that it would be unjust to myself, and uncourteous to the former obstetric lecturer, if I passed them by entirely unnoticed.

Dr. Blundell attempts to establish a distinction between the *clinical* and *midwifery* chairs. The former he allows to be *hospital* property, the latter, he says, is *private* property—a proposition utterly untenable,—the hospital, through its treasurer, having as decided a control over the one as over the other chair; and *such was formerly Dr. Blundell's own opinion*. In the draft of a paper of those "inchoate arrangements," which occurred in 1825, furnished to me by

his own solicitor, there occurs the following passage: "It is hereby declared and agreed, that the introduction of the said Samuel Ashwell into the chair of the said lectureship, and the acceptance of him as such associate, assistant, or successor, by the treasurer of the said hospital, is intended to be, and shall he taken, *as a condition precedent to all others*," &c. &c. &c. If this arrangement could not be effected without the permission of the treasurer (who might have been hostile), what becomes of any question as to "private property" in such a chair or lectureship?

Dr. Blundell has, throughout this controversy, assumed an elevation of tone and station to which, as yet, he has not established a satisfactory claim. That it is right to aim high, all will allow; but when my predecessor voluntarily steps forth as the disinterested and suffering advocate of the class to which he belongs, he ought to be nearly if not quite certain, that he has not overrated his qualifications for such high duties. I am not sure, but I desire to express my opinion with diffidence, that the former obstetric lecturer of Guy's Hospital has mistaken his love of money for the love of a high-spirited independence.

As I am quite certain, and the facts are well known, that for a pecuniary consideration asked for him by his friend, he would, nay, he must, had it been given, have sacri-

ficed the magnanimous sentiments contained in these two epistles. *Hinc i lachrymæ*. Dr. Blundell has amused himself at my supposed mistake in the *La* line, an error arising from the misquotation of his own letter, the sense, more than the measure of the verse, occupying my mind. I may, perhaps, be allowed to say, that, unlike my predecessor, I dislike quotation of this kind; there is something like pedantry about them, and the fulness and power of our own tongue, when well understood, disdain such illustrations. It is a small satisfaction to me to know, that notwithstanding the high language of my predecessor, the reputation of the Guy's obstetric school has in no way diminished; on the contrary, the numbers and close attention of the class equal, if they do not exceed, those of former years. These letters are not calculated to augment, scarcely to sustain, Dr. Blundell's former reputation. I have, therefore, answered them with regret and great reluctance, and I trust that my predecessor's friends will not advise him again to engage in so unprofitable controversy.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,

S. A.

Nov. 4th, 1834.